

NEWS RELEASE

ETSC Welcomes New Member from Finland

1 December 2009, Brussels – Liikenneturva, the Central Organisation for Traffic Safety in Finland, has become the 43rd member of the European Transport Safety Council⁽¹⁾ today. Operating under the guidance of the Ministry of Transport and Communications, it promotes the safety of road traffic by influencing people's attitudes and traffic behaviour.

The number of road deaths in Finland decreased by 21% in 2001-2008, below the EU average of 28% and much lower than the EU15 average of 37%. Finland is 7th best in the EU in terms of road deaths per million population, the number of which went down from 83 in 2001 to 65 in 2008 (currently also 65 for EU15 and 79 for EU27)⁽²⁾.

In its 2006 resolution the Finnish Government set a goal of reducing the number of road deaths to 250 by 2010, and a much more ambitious aim to reduce annual road deaths to less than 100 by 2025. However, with 344 deaths occurring on Finnish roads in 2008, the country is still far from reaching those targets. Finland is also among the underperformers when it comes to the EU target of halving road deaths in the period 2001-2010, with the actual yearly rate of reduction under 5% instead of the necessary 7.4%.

Speed remains the single biggest contributor to road deaths and injuries in Finland, and experts also link at least half of fatal speeding accidents to drink driving.

„Finland faces important challenges in road safety,” said Matti Jarvinen, Managing Director of Liikenneturva. *„These challenges are not unique to our country though, and it will be much easier to tackle them while exchanging information and effective solutions with other EU Members through collaboration within ETSC.”*

„We have already cooperated with Liikenneturva in the past getting fine quality data and information on road safety in Finland from them,” said ETSC Executive Director Antonio Avenoso. *„Now when they formally join ETSC we look forward to involving them even closer in the pan-European road safety research projects and country benchmarking.”*

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Notes to Editors:

(1) **The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC)** is a Brussels-based independent non-profit making organisation dedicated to the reduction of the number and severity of transport crashes in Europe. The ETSC seeks to identify and promote research-based measures with a high safety potential. It brings together 39 national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. www.etsc.be

(2) **3rd Road Safety PIN Report** (p.25). www.etsc.be/documents/PIN_Report.pdf